

TWO OF ONLY TWO

by
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The fine bust type birdstone (Fig. 1) was found on a farm near Lawrence, Van Buren County, Michigan. It measures 1 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches high and is made of gneiss - one of the preferred materials for these rare artifacts.

A most interesting feature of this birdstone is the way the eyes were fashioned. They are classed under the "pop-eyed button type" while the eyes on normal bust birdstones are more cylindrical.

In his book, *Birdstones of the North American Indian*, Earl Townsend shows only one such birdstone. It is the fine Lucas County, Ohio, specimen shown on page 569, Fig. F

The Townsend example and the one from Michigan are the only two such birdstones with eyes like these I have ever had the privilege to handle.

Is it possible that there are only two birdstones with this type eye? After owning this fine example for more than ten years, I've arrived at two possible conclusions. One is that on most bust birdstones, the maker did not want to take a chance on damaging the eyes during the tedious peck, grind, and polish manufacturing method. Secondly, the maker may have thought that by bending the rules slightly he could create more attractive eyes on his creation.

Reference: 1959 - Townsend, Earl - *Birdstones of the North American Indian*, Indianapolis.



Figure 1 (Simper). Bust birdstone from Van Buren County, Michigan.